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CG, RW
SUBJECT: DEMOBILIZATION OFFICIAL EXPLORES NTAGANDA,
NKUNDA'S ROLE IN REGIONAL STABILITY

Classified By: Ambassador W. Stuart Symington for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)
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¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Jean Sayinzoga, Chairman of Rwanda's Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) told visiting EU Great Lakes Special Envoy Roeland van de Geer and Deputy to the U.S. Special Advisor for the Great Lakes (and former Ambassador to Burundi) James Yellin on December 14 that if Congolese authorities were to arrest Bosco Ntaganda at this time, it would destabilize the region. Sayinzoga defended Rwanda's continued low-profile detention of Laurent Nkunda, and urged UN peacekeepers in the Congo to do more to help repatriate ex-combatants. DCM and UK poloff attended the meeting in Sayinzoga's office. END SUMMARY.

EU ENVOY CONVEYS DIFFICULT SITUATION IN KIVUS

¶2. (C) EU Great Lakes Special Envoy van de Geer, who had met Sayinzoga on previous visits, opened by describing the situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): integration of the Congres National pour la Defense du Peuple (CNDP) was "difficult," the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) were "falling apart," and soldier morale was low. Sayinzoga said current CNDP leader Bosco Ntaganda feared prosecution by the International Criminal Court (ICC), which has issued a warrant for his arrest, but was also building up his presence in the Masisi Territory of North Kivu province, which was becoming "CNDP Boscoland"--a very dangerous development, in van de Geer's view. The FDLR continued to be "very present" in the Kivus and after Rwandan forces withdrew following the DRC-Rwanda combined military campaign, the Government of the DRC (GDRC) failed to follow up adequately. He warned that the GDRC must control its army or run the risk some would defect to Ntaganda. Sexual violence was high, though decreasing. The recent arrests of leaders of the Forces Democratiques pour la Liberation du Rwanda (FDLR) leaders in Germany were a positive step; however, it would have been a bigger achievement if it had happened four months ago - since the FDLR had already been expecting it. (Note: The FDLR is an armed Rwandan group based in eastern DRC that opposes the Government of Rwanda and includes former members and supporters of the Rwandan government that orchestrated the 1994 genocide. End Note.) Van de Geer said Europeans felt increased pressure to act and he hoped France would move on FDLR Secretary General Callixte Mbarushima, resident in that country. Van de Geer also hoped the EU would be able to get the planned EU-Rwandan judicial cooperation off the ground soon, including a small liaison office in Rwanda that would enhance bilateral cooperation.

WHY NOT ARREST BOSCO?

¶3. (C) Van de Geer told Sayinzoga that he had previously discussed Bosco Ntaganda with Rwanda's National Security Service, and was told Rwanda still had some moderating

influence over the CNDP through Ntaganda, so handing him to the ICC would pose a risk. Van de Geer then contrasted the Rwandan attitude with that of the Congolese army, which said "go ahead and arrest him." Sayinzoga argued this was "not the time" to turn Ntaganda in or place too much pressure on him lest he develop his own resistance; he remains a useful link to the CNDP and arresting him would decrease the ability of the GDRC to control the situation in eastern DRC. At some time, however, he would have to be arrested.

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR NKUNDA; RWANDA KEEPING HIS PROFILE LOW
QLOCAL SUPPORT FOR NKUNDA; RWANDA KEEPING HIS PROFILE LOW

¶4. (C) Van de Geer said North Kivu army chief General Vainqueur Mayala told him there were Tutsi elements linking with the FDLR. Sayinzoga agreed this was plausible: "Congolese Tutsis are not happy with what happened to Nkunda." (Note: Rwandan authorities have held former CNDP leader Laurent Nkunda under house arrest in Rwanda since January 2009. End Note.) He noted that Rwandans had demonstrated in favor of Nkunda when authorities took him into custody, adding that he had not seen Nkunda personally as he had no need to, but that Nkunda was able to receive visitors. (Note: Nkunda's lawyer told us recently that only Nkunda's wife was allowed to see him; post has no confirmed information. End Note). Nonetheless, Sayinzoga concluded, it was best to keep public visibility low rather than allow media access to Nkunda; it was not in Rwanda's interest to be seen as promoting him.

¶5. (C) In response to Yellin's query about the demobilization/reintegration (DDRRR) program, Sayinzoga said Rwanda wished to accelerate the repatriation of ex-armed combatants

and had urged MONUC officials, during a December 3 meeting in Gisenyi, to help facilitate this. However, there were places the FARDC was unable to go and although MONUC troops were now physically closer to the FDLR, MONUC had not yet redeployed its DDRRR structures and personnel. There were 480 FDLR and RUD-Urunana ex-combatants at the demobilization and reintegration camp in Mutobo. (Note: The RUD-Urunana is a breakaway faction of the FDLR. In a public ceremony, Rwandan authorities released into Rwandan society the 362 ex-combatants who had completed the course at Mutobo on December 23. End Note.) Sayinzoga said the FARDC sometimes beat and even killed FDLR combatants in the Congo, and the FDLR took their revenge on the local population. He added that the FDLR in Denmark had recently sent the FDLR in the Congo \$8000; Van de Geer concurred with the need for Europe to act against the FDLR in Europe.

¶6. (C) Van de Geer asked Sayinzoga if he had any concrete suggestions to reinforce the Rwandan-DRC partnership. Sayinzoga explained GOR's three pronged citizenship "strategy," which (1) allows Rwandans to hold two or more nationalities, including Rwandan and DRC; (2) allows Rwandans to resettle in other countries and retain Rwandan nationality and the ability to return to Rwanda at any time; and (3) allows the return of those of Rwandan origin who have adopted another nationality. Fourth, he added, genocidaires could be tried in the country in which they resided or be tried in Rwanda. Rwanda was prepared to help countries that receive FDLR members. The UNHCR cessation clause has already been signed, he added; they will be able to become citizens of their resettlement countries or they can return to Rwanda. (Note: The cessation clause is a provision of the 1951 Refugee Convention that terminates refugee status. Technically, it will not take effect QQ1S\qUNSQission will merge functions with those parts of government that handle refugee issues, and that when it does, he intends to retire. As long as FDLR forces remain in the field in significant numbers, however, the GOR is unlikely to dismantle the RDRC, which is one of Kigali's key tools for de-fanging the FDLR. END COMMENT. SYMINGTON